

Even if his operations in the campaigns of 1813 and 1814 did not furnish the actual proof of the existence of this pretension, the words spoken by him would be equivalent to a confession. "Receiving news of the victory of Gros-beeren," Bernadotte cried out enthusiastically, "La France au plus digne." — "Grands Dieux!" answered Pozzo, "la France est à moi." The Crown Prince was silent. Metternich (vol. i. p. 225) says that at Langres, in 1814, Bernadotte was at once suggested if any person except a Bourbon or the son of Napoleon were to hold the crown. De Vitrolles (tome i. p. 4(52) dates Bernadotte's hopes of the crown from his interview with the Czar at Abo in 1812, when only Lord Cathcart, the English Ambassador, was present. It was this pretension on the part of Bernadotte that made him so anxious to avoid striking any great blow in 1813 with his Swedes against the French. Muffling (p. 82), after describing how Blücher, being informed of the daily progressive measures which the Crown Prince adopted to prove to the French army that he acted not only as their countryman but as their friend, and how far he was from wishing to destroy them by his Swedes, or to shed their blood, says that Blücher marched to his right to obviate all political high treason. "Thus one of the three Frenchmen summoned by the sovereigns to assist them in conquering Napoleon had to be watched by an army of 100,000 men!" * It was to Lord Stewart's threat to withdraw the English subsidy if Bernadotte would not advance to Leipsic that, says Muffling (p. 87), "the plains of Breitenfeld are indebted for the honor of being trodden by a successor of the great King of Sweden." Blücher's suspicions may have had some foundation. See *Marmont*, tome vii. pp. 26-28, where he says that Bernadotte, in 1814, was in communication with General Maison, commanding a French corps in Flanders (a former *aide de camp* of his), and offered to disarm the Prussian corps under his orders, and then to pass over to the French. He only required from Napoleon a promise in writing to procure for him another sovereignty if he thus lost his claims to the throne of Sweden. Napoleon refused to sign the engagement himself, offering that it should be signed by his brother Joseph; and the affair thus fell to the ground from want of mutual confidence. Napoleon let Alexander receive Bernadotte's communication, and the Czar informed Bernadotte that he forgave him on account of his previous conduct, but made him engage to leave France at once. So says Marmont, without professing to have seen any proofs, but remarking that the sudden departure of Bernadotte from Paris was thus explained. For the feelings of the Restoration as to Bernadotte's retention of his position in 1815, see Talleyrand's *Correspondence*, vol. ii. pp. 6, 7, where a distinction is drawn between him and Murat. "It is," says Talleyrand, "an evil, a very great evil, that that man should have been called upon to succeed to the throne of Sweden. But it is an evil which, if ever it can be remedied at all, can only be remedied by time, and the events that time will bring."